

Lily thumbs her nose at 'perfect' ro

LILY TOMLIN initially turned down the role of officious, prim-and-proper Miss Hathaway in the movie remake of *The Beverly Hillbillies* out of shock that she should be seen that way!

"When everyone told me I was the perfect casting for Miss Hathaway, I was appalled," Tomlin tells *TV WEEK*, dressed in a tartan red blazer with black shirt and pants and sipping tea in a Beverly Hills hotel suite. In the original TV series, which ran from 1962 to 1971, Miss Hathaway — assistant to greedy bank manager Mr Drysdale — was played by the late comedy actress Nancy Culp.

"I love to play characters and invent them, but it's different from someone coming up to me and saying I *am* that person," Tomlin adds by way of explanation. "As wonderful as Nancy was on the show — being that Miss Hathaway was independent and a career person and everything else — there was that little stereotypical part of her that was depicted as a spinster and sort of 'gaga' over Jethro, and that was awkward for me.

"I want to think I'm Rita Hayworth, not Jane Hathaway," the never-married 54-year-old star concludes with a grudging smile.

Tomlin finally took the part after a barrage of phone calls from family and friends who had read

... but she finally takes to *The Beverly Hillbillies*!

the rumored casting report in the newspaper.

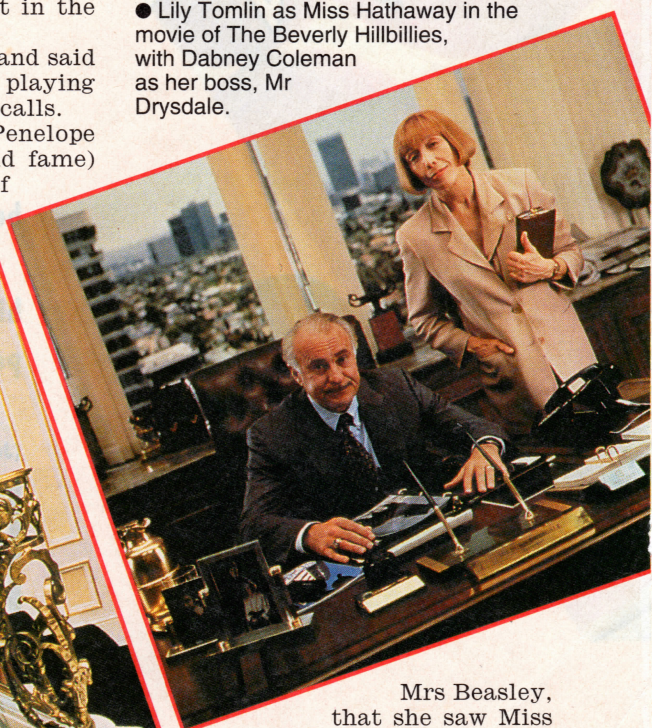
"Even my mother called and said they were all excited I was playing Miss Hathaway," Tomlin recalls.

"And then the director (Penelope Spheeris, of *Wayne's World* fame) told me it was because of my other characters, Ernestine and

● Lily Tomlin as Miss Hathaway in the movie of *The Beverly Hillbillies*, with Dabney Coleman as her boss, Mr Drysdale.



● The new Clampett clan at large in Beverly Hills ... with Miss Hathaway (Lily Tomlin) keeping an eye on them.



Mrs Beasley, that she saw Miss Hathaway in me, which helped me understand a little better."

The *Beverly Hillbillies* movie stars Cloris Leachman as Granny, Jim Varney as Jed, Erika Eleniak (of *Baywatch* fame) as Elly May and newcomer Diedrich Bader as cousin Jethro, and tells how the

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MOVIES

Clampetts strike oil near their Ozark, Arkansas hillbilly shack and wind up in a multi-million-dollar mansion in Beverly Hills.

Although the TV series, starring Buddy Ebsen, is still one of the most loved and watched in the history of television, Tomlin confesses to knowing little about it.

"I was neither a fan, nor did I hate it," she explained. "I didn't watch television — I was much too hip for TV in those days! My generation in the Sixties thought we were way beyond television and we prided ourselves on being conscious of our culture but not necessarily the shows that affected it."

Tomlin initially struggled with

the characterisation of Miss Hathaway as an ageing spinster lusting after young Jethro.

"I wanted her to be contemporized to the extent when she goes after Jethro, you don't see a spinster but you feel that, if Jethro doesn't respond, Miss Hathaway was going to move on, because she has her eye on two or three other people!," Tomlin says.

"There was a scene we never got to shoot that showed Miss Hathaway carrying a condom around in her wallet — the perfect payback in this age of sexual liberation from the old joke of fellows carrying it around."

The Beverly Hillbillies, according to Tomlin, may be her first

film since 9 To 5 that could win approval from her own family back in the hillbilly state of Kentucky.

"When I first started out, I got on Laugh-In (as a regular from 1970 to 1973) and then did a guest spot on The Glen Campbell Show," she recalls. "I've never had as high a mark from them since!"

"But when I made 9 To 5, my Auntie Mae said my Uncle Wallace, who is a pig farmer and in his 80s, put on a suit and tie and drove 60 miles to see it — and he hadn't been to see a movie in 30 years!"

"I think The Beverly Hillbillies is the first movie since then that Uncle Wallace might actually make the drive into town for!"

From Jenny Cooney in Los Angeles